

obtaining, from outside, TV program table data for an area where a viewer resides, said TV program table data including channel information and time information for each of TV programs planned to be broadcast in that area;

detecting a channel that is being viewed by the viewer;

detecting times at which a viewing of the channel is started and ended;

identifying a program ID of a currently viewed program from said TV program table data by comparing said detected channel and a current time with the channel and time information of said TV program table data;

obtaining audience data which include at least the program ID and viewed time information of the viewed program based on said TV program table data and results of the detecting of times, said viewed time information including at least one of (1) a view start time of each viewed program, (2) a view end time of each viewed program, and (3) a difference between the view start time and the view end time; and

transferring, via the Internet to a collection center, the obtained audience data along with ID data of the viewer.

6. (Twice amended) A device for obtaining audience data on TV programs, comprising:

a program table data obtaining means for obtaining, from outside, TV program table data for an area where a viewer resides, said TV program table data including channel information

and time information for each of TV programs planned to be broadcast in that area;

a first detector for detecting a channel that is being viewed by the viewer;

a second detector for detecting times at which a viewing of the channel is started and ended;

a program identification means for identifying a program ID of a currently viewed program from said TV program table data by comparing said detected channel and a current time with the channel and time information of said TV program table data;

an audience data obtaining means for obtaining audience data which include at least the program ID and viewed time information of the viewed program based on results of the detecting of times and said TV program table data, said viewed time information including at least one of (1) a view start time of each viewed program, (2) a view end time of each viewed program, and (3) a difference between the view start time and the view end time; and

a transfer means for transferring, via the Internet to a collection center, the obtained program ID and the viewed time information along with ID data of the viewer.

11. (Twice amended) A recording medium storing a computer, readable program for carrying out the steps of:

obtaining, from outside, TV program table data for an area where a viewer resides, said TV program table data including

channel information and time information for each of TV programs planned to be broadcast in that area;

detecting a channel that is being viewed by the viewer;

detecting times at which a viewing of the channel is started and ended;

identifying a program ID of a currently viewed program from said TV program table data by comparing said detected channel and a current tune with the channel and time information of said TV program table data;

obtaining audience data which include at least the program ID and viewed time information of the viewed program based on said TV program table data and results of the detecting of times, said viewed time information including at least one of (1) a view start time of each viewed program, (2) a view end time of each viewed program, and (3) a difference between the view start time and the view end time; and

transferring, via the Internet to a collection center, the obtained audience data along with ID data of the viewer.

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13 are pending in this application of which claims 1, 6 and 11 have been amended herein.

Claims 1-3, 5-8 and 10-13 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Herz et al. (US 5,758,257) in view of Williams et al. (US 5,977,964). Claims 4 and 9 are